

The background of the slide features a soft-focus image of medical supplies. A silver stethoscope is draped across the top right. In the center, a clear plastic syringe with a white plunger and needle is visible, with numerical markings on its barrel. To the right, two white, oval-shaped pills are scattered. The overall color palette is light and clinical, with a focus on the medical theme.

What's the Story With Ozempic for Weight Loss?

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Ozempic in the Media



Ozempic's popularity leads to shortages for people with Type 2 diabetes

JULY 10, 2024 · 5:00 AM ET
By Sydney Lupkin



Designer slammed for 'I heart Ozempic' shirt: 'Toxic values'

By Brooke Kato
Published July 9, 2024, 10:10 a.m. ET



Rebel Wilson shared she briefly used Ozempic in weight loss journey

"Those drugs can be good," the actress said.

By [Shafiq Najib](#) [GMA](#)
March 31, 2024, 3:30 PM



Elon Musk says he used a popular weight-loss drug to get 'fit, ripped, and healthy'

[Anna Medaris](#) and [Gabby Landsverk](#) Updated Sep 26, 2023, 2:32 PM PDT

- **Elon Musk credited fasting and the weight-loss drug Wegovy for what a fan called his "ripped" body.**

sources: NPR, ABC News, NY Post, & Business Insider



GLP-1 Mechanism: How Do These Drugs Work?

Action:

Mimic GLP-1 hormone, a natural hormone that gets excreted by the gut in response to food intake

Effects:

1. Pancreas

- Stimulate insulin secretion
- Takes sugar out of blood

2. Liver

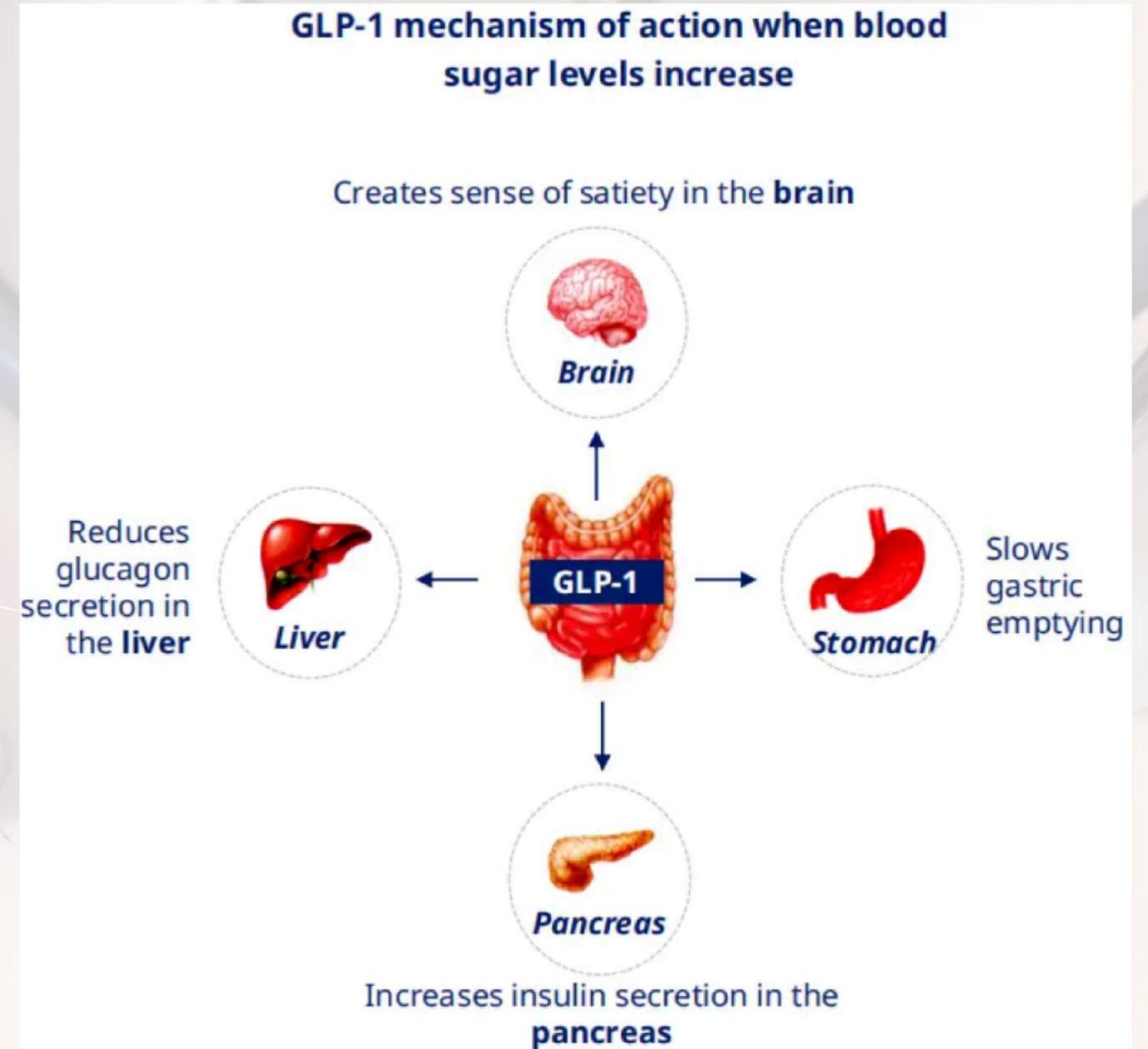
- Inhibit glucagon release
- Prevents release of sugar into body

3. Gut

- Slow gastric emptying
- Feel fuller

4. Brain

- Reduce appetite and food intake
- Feel fuller



GLP-1 Agonist Drugs Comparison

	DOSAGE	DOSAGE FORM	APPROVED FOR	WHO CAN TAKE IT?	OTHER BENEFITS
Ozempic (SEMAGLUTIDE)	1 WEEKLY		TYPE 2 DIABETES	 ADULTS	HEART, KIDNEYS, WEIGHT LOSS
Wegovy (SEMAGLUTIDE)	1 WEEKLY		WEIGHT LOSS	12+ →  KIDS + ADULTS	N/A
Saxenda (LIRAGLUTIDE)	1 DAILY		WEIGHT LOSS	12+ →  KIDS + ADULTS	N/A

source: GoodRX Health



Semaglutide and Cardiovascular Outcomes in Patients with Type 2 Diabetes

Published November 10, 2016

Authors: Steven P. Marso, M.D., Stephen C. Bain, M.D., Agostino Consoli, M.D., Freddy G. Eliaschewitz, M.D., Esteban Jódar, M.D., Lawrence A. Leiter, M.D., Ildiko Lingvay, M.D., M.P.H., M.S.C.S., Julio Rosenstock, M.D., Jochen Seufert, M.D., Ph.D., Mark L. Warren, M.D., Vincent Woo, M.D., Oluf Hansen, M.Sc., Anders G. Holst, M.D., Ph.D., Jonas Pettersson, M.D., Ph.D., and Tina Vilsbøll, M.D., D.M.Sc., for the SUSTAIN-6 Investigators*

BACKGROUND

Regulatory guidance specifies the need to establish cardiovascular safety of new diabetes therapies in patients with type 2 diabetes in order to rule out excess cardiovascular risk. The cardiovascular effects of semaglutide, a glucagon-like peptide 1 analogue with an extended half-life of approximately 1 week, in type 2 diabetes are unknown.

CONCLUSIONS

In patients with type 2 diabetes who were at high cardiovascular risk, the rate of cardiovascular death, nonfatal myocardial infarction, or nonfatal stroke was significantly lower among patients receiving semaglutide than among those receiving placebo, an outcome that confirmed the noninferiority of semaglutide. (Funded by Novo Nordisk; SUSTAIN-6 ClinicalTrials.gov number, [NCT01720446](https://www.clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/study/NCT01720446).)



Once-Weekly Semaglutide in Adults with Overweight or Obesity

Published February 10, 2021

Authors: John P.H. Wilding, D.M., Rachel L. Batterham, M.B., B.S., Ph.D., Salvatore Calanna, Ph.D., Melanie Davies, M.D., Luc F. Van Gaal, M.D., Ph.D., Ildiko Lingvay, M.D., M.P.H., M.S.C.S. , Barbara M. McGowan, M.D., Ph.D., Julio Rosenstock, M.D., Marie T.D. Tran, M.D., Ph.D., Thomas A. Wadden, Ph.D., Sean Wharton, M.D., Pharm.D., Koutaro Yokote, M.D., Ph.D., Niels Zeuthen, M.Sc., and Robert F. Kushner, M.D., for the STEP 1 Study Group*

BACKGROUND

Obesity is a global health challenge with few pharmacologic options. Whether adults with obesity can achieve weight loss with once-weekly semaglutide at a dose of 2.4 mg as an adjunct to lifestyle intervention has not been confirmed.

CONCLUSIONS

In participants with overweight or obesity, 2.4 mg of semaglutide once weekly plus lifestyle intervention was associated with sustained, clinically relevant reduction in body weight. (Funded by Novo Nordisk; STEP 1 ClinicalTrials.gov number, [NCT03548935](https://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/study/NCT03548935)).

March 23, 2021

Effect of Continued Weekly Subcutaneous Semaglutide vs Placebo on Weight Loss Maintenance in Adults With Overweight or Obesity

The STEP 4 Randomized Clinical Trial

Domenica Rubino, MD¹; Niclas Abrahamsson, MD²; Melanie Davies, MD^{3,4}; Dan Hesse, PhD⁵; Frank L. Greenway, MD⁶; Camilla Jensen, MSc⁵; Ildiko Lingvay, MD, MPH, MSCS⁷; Ofri Mosenzon, MD⁸; Julio Rosenstock, MD⁹; Miguel A. Rubio, MD¹⁰; Gottfried Rudofsky, MD¹¹; Sayeh Tadayon, MD⁵; Thomas A. Wadden, PhD¹²; Dror Dicker, MD¹³; for the STEP 4 Investigators

Importance The effect of continuing vs withdrawing treatment with semaglutide, a glucagon-like peptide 1 receptor agonist, on weight loss maintenance in people with overweight or obesity is unknown.

Objective To compare continued once-weekly treatment with subcutaneous semaglutide, 2.4 mg, with switch to placebo for weight maintenance (both with lifestyle intervention) in adults with overweight or obesity after a 20-week run-in with subcutaneous semaglutide titrated to 2.4 mg weekly.

Design, Setting, and Participants Randomized, double-blind, 68-week phase 3a withdrawal study conducted at 73 sites in 10 countries from June 2018 to March 2020 in adults with body mass index of at least 30 (or ≥ 27 with ≥ 1 weight-related comorbidity) and without diabetes.

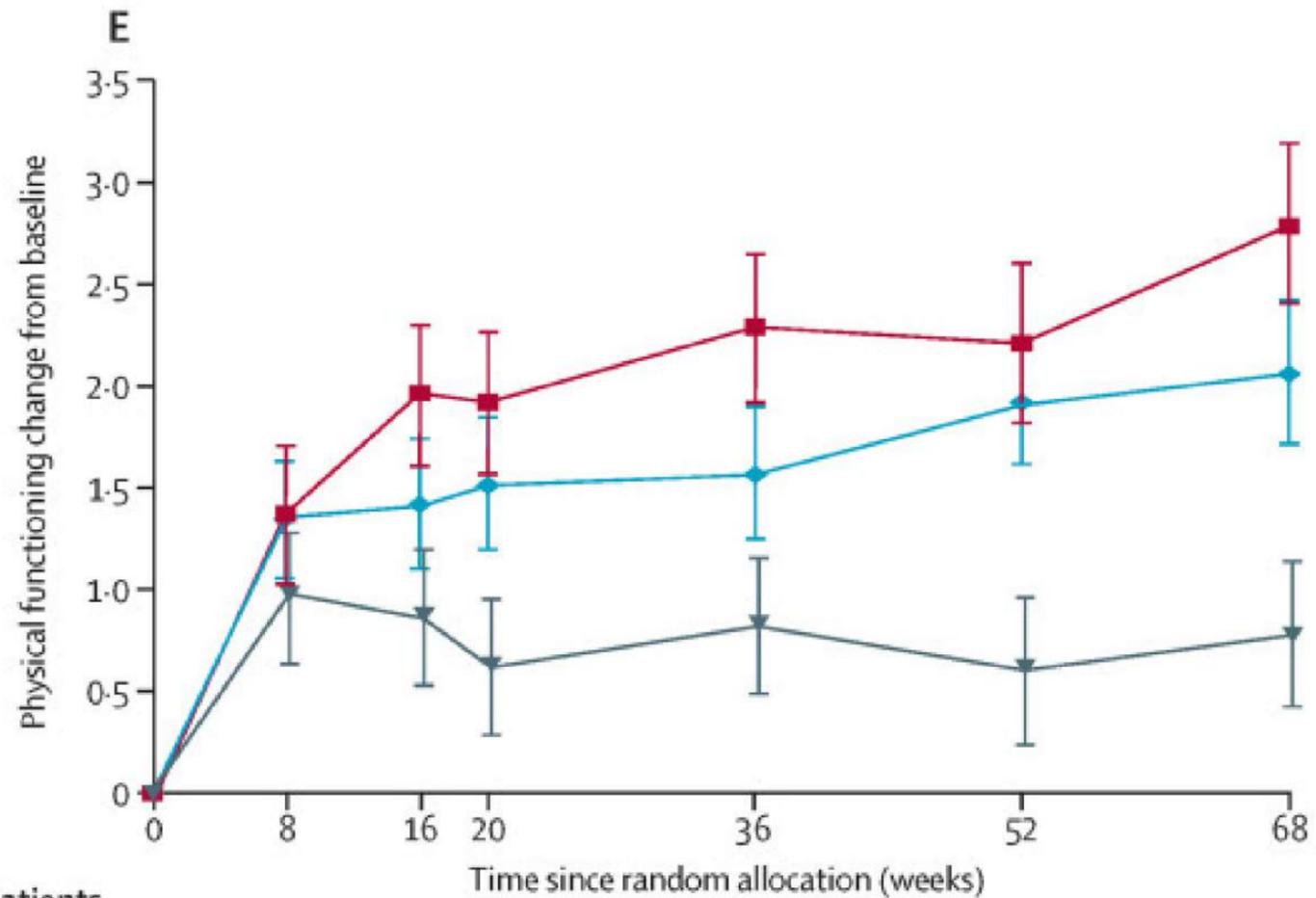
Conclusions and Relevance Among adults with overweight or obesity who completed a 20-week run-in period with subcutaneous semaglutide, 2.4 mg once weekly, maintaining treatment with semaglutide compared with switching to placebo resulted in continued weight loss over the following 48 weeks.

Side Effects

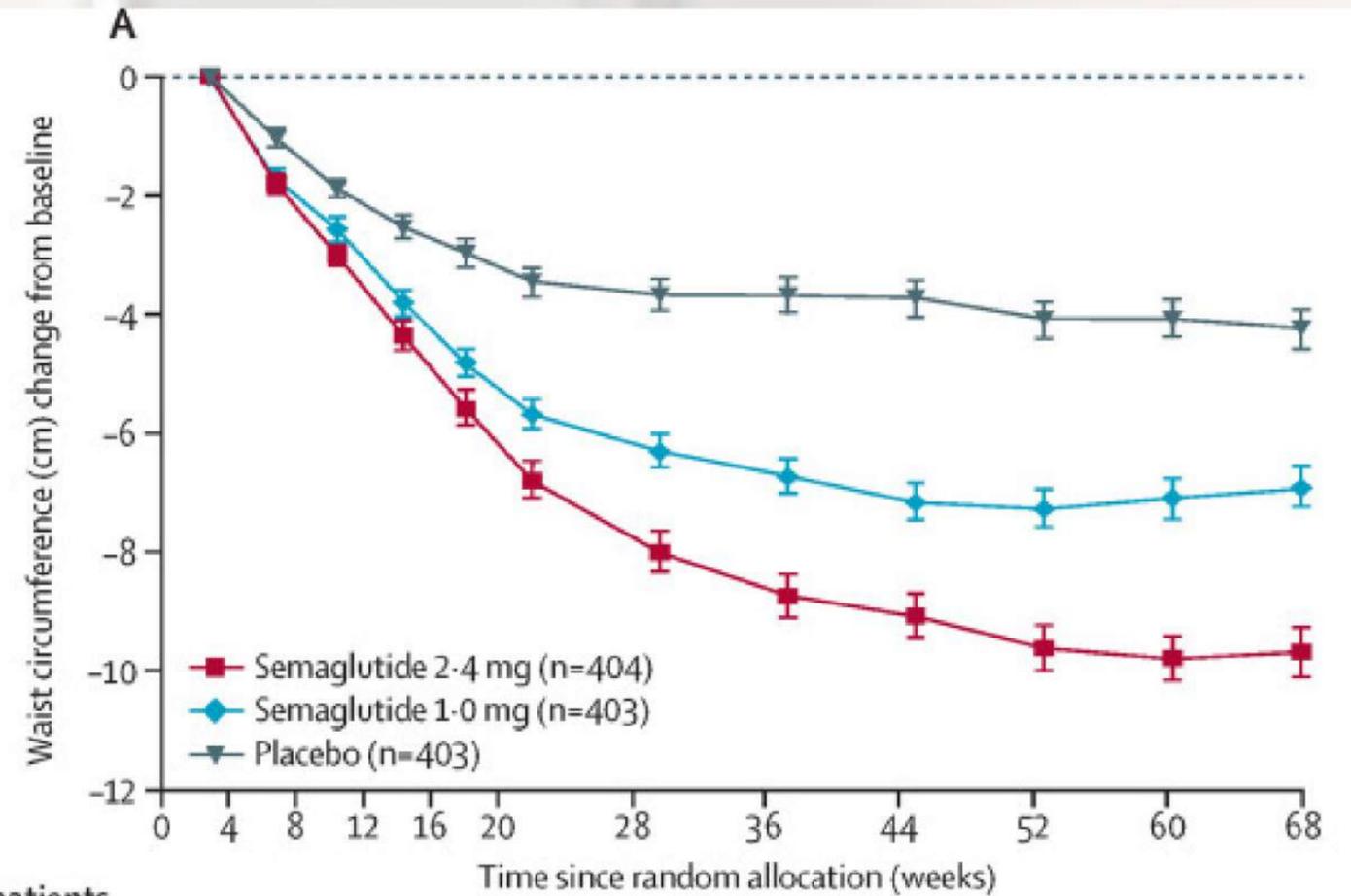


- Common Gastrointestinal Issues:
 - **Nausea, Diarrhea, and Vomiting:** Often occur, especially after a change in dose. Gradually increasing the dose can help mitigate these effects
- Other Side Effects (less common):
 - **Hypoglycemia:** Low blood sugar levels, particularly if combined with other diabetic medications
 - **Ketoacidosis:** A serious condition caused by high levels of ketones in the blood
- Serious Side Effects (rare, debatable):
 - **Acute Pancreatitis:** Inflammation of the pancreas
 - **Gallbladder Disease:** Including gallstones

Other Benefits



Number of patients	0	8	16	20	36	52	68
Semaglutide 2.4 mg	397	388	382	386	376	373	376
Semaglutide 1.0 mg	396	384	374	374	367	359	370
Placebo	394	383	378	374	369	354	365



Number of patients	0	4	8	12	16	20	28	36	44	52	60	68
Semaglutide 2.4 mg	404	395	397	390	389	392	386	383	381	381	378	387
Semaglutide 1.0 mg	403	393	392	385	383	383	378	377	373	370	374	380
Placebo	403	398	393	389	387	383	381	377	371	367	365	375

What It Means

Physical functioning increased and waist size decreased with use of semaglutide

Medi-Cal Coverage

Anti-Obesity Preparations

Drug Name	Dosage	Strength/ Package Size	Billing Unit	UM Type	Code I
Anti-Obesity Preparations					
Liraglutide (Saxenda) *	Prefilled Pen	18 mg/3 ml	ml	LR, QL	* Restricted to 1) Chronic weight management; and 2) Maximum quantity of 1 carton (5 prefilled pens) per dispensing and one dispensing every 28 days. Also restricted to NDC labeler code 00169.
Semaglutide (Wegovy) *	Prefilled Pen	0.25 mg/0.5 ml 0.5 mg/0.5 ml 1 mg/0.5 ml 1.7 mg/0.75 ml 2.4 mg/0.75 ml	ml ml ml ml ml	LR, QL	* Restricted to 1) Chronic weight management; and 2) Maximum quantity of 1 carton (4 single-dose pen-injector) per dispensing and one dispensing every 28 days. Also restricted to NDC labeler code 00169.

For information on benefits enrollment and renewal assistance, visit:

<https://rootscommunityhealth.org/our-work/health-wellness-services/benefits-enrollment/>



Other Considerations

- Medi-Cal coverage:
 - Diabetes and weight loss (may require special permission)
- Starting and stopping:
 - **STEP 4 trial** showed that when half who stopped Wegovy (semaglutide) for 20 weeks, 70% regained the weight after 48 weeks
 - **STEP 1 extension study** showed people who were on long-term regained weight while those who stayed on it did not

STEP 4 TRIAL: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33755728/>

STEP 1 EXTENSION STUDY: <https://clinicaltrials.gov/study/NCT03548935>



Bottom Line

- GLP-1 agonists are very new, very effective diabetes and weight loss medications.
- Most common side effects are related to upset stomach (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea) and can be eased by starting low and increasing the dosage slowly.
- The medications are still expensive and may also be in short supply. Check with your health care provider to get more information.